

EVA MASTERMAN

TOUCH ME USE ME

A SCULPTURAL CERAMIC INSTALLATION

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Touch Me Use Me
Clay Arch, Gimhae
2018



INTRODUCTION

Touch Me Use Me
Clay Arch, Gimhae
2018

Touch Me Use Me is an installation of sculptural ceramic objects, commissioned by the British Ceramic Biennial in 2017, and first shown at the AWARD exhibition at Spode Factory, Stoke on Trent, UK. It was also developed further as a second installation as part of the 2017-18 cultural exchange between South Korea and Britain, at the internationally renowned museum and ceramic residency, Clay Arch Gimhae in South Korea.

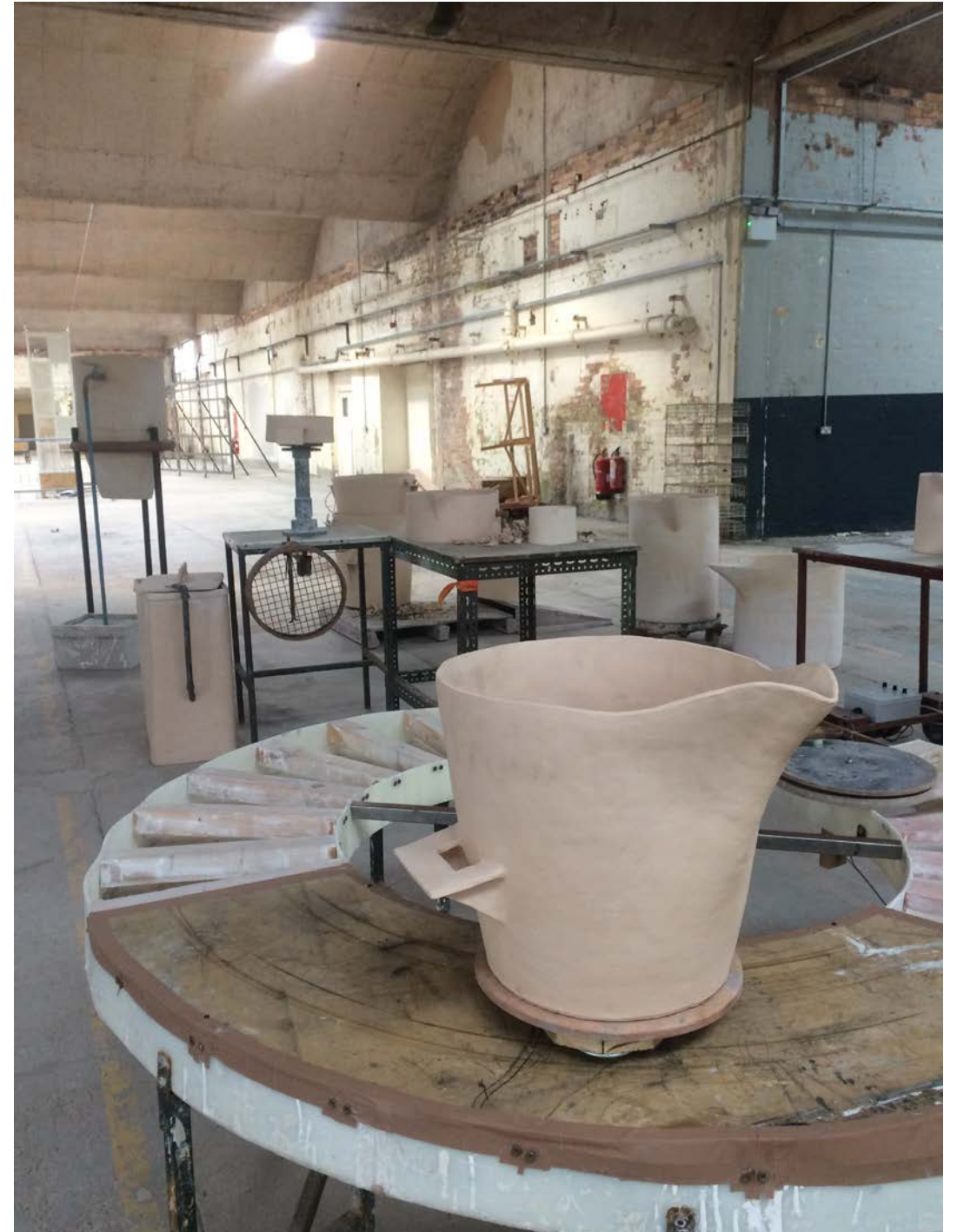
It continues Masterman's practice-based research examining the public and private nature of an artist's studio and the transformation of domestic and industrial ceramic languages into sculptural objects. It aimed to build on the legacy of site-specific work as a device through which environment and context can be interrogated, by using the industrial heritage of Stoke on Trent, and later the contemporary environment of Clay Arch, to connect past histories with personal narratives and communities.

The research investigates the studio as a site to manifest Derrida's supplement, a place that is inherently incomplete and is supported or fulfilled through the addition of other objects. The significance of this brings the contexts of ceramics as sculpture and ceramics as an anthropological material together in order to question the definitions of sculpture as object and object as installation.

The work echoes a 'forgotten' or 'disused' ceramic studio with moving elements that are activated as the viewer walks through the work. This re-activation aimed to draw attention to the relationship of the object and viewer, pulling them in as a complicit part of the work, a transitory supplement.



Touch Me Use Me
Stoke on Trent
2017



Touch Me Use Me
Clay Arch, Gimhae
2018

The work was reimagined as a second installation as part of the Year of Cultural Exchange between South Korea and Britain. Here, the studio was extended to include the gallery space, with the work 'unpacked' and exhibited on packing crates used to transport it from the UK to South Korea.



RESEARCH CONTEXT

Touch Me Use Me
Clay Arch, Gimhae
2018

Firstly exhibited at the AWARD exhibition of the British Ceramic Biennial in Stoke on Trent, the research examines the intersections between industry, craft ceramics and fine art sculpture and installation. There is also an extended investigation into how site specific work can contemporise and contextualise past histories. In

Stoke on Trent was previously the height of ceramic industry in the UK and was the home of Wedgewood and Spode China, among others. The work used industrial remnants and signifiers to examine that history in terms of the lost communities it represents and asked questions around making as a public and private activity. Those audience members who walked through the installation caused elements to move drawing their own physical experience into the narrative of the work and site.

When reimagined in Clay Arch, it built on this legacy of site specificity to incorporate elements from the residency space, packing materials and original found pieces from the Spode factory itself. Audiences were taken further into the supplementary environment and given a duty of care with subtle instructions to interact with the work directly.

Clay Arch is a well established ceramic museum and residency, and, as with Stoke on Trent, is in an area of previous ceramic industry. The exhibition brought together nine artists working in clay from Britain and South Korea, firmly positioning it in the extended field of ceramic sculpture and its intersection between craft, industry and fine art.



METHODOLOGY

Stuff from
my Studio

Glaze Tests, a plastic jug from my aunt, ceramic tea bowls used as slurry pots from a student at the RCA, kiln props from Clay Arch Residency and studio 2018

The work was mainly hand built taking inspiration from objects of industry and personal history. Container motifs were enlarged and examined as sculptural objects using hand building techniques. The work was unglazed to reference the 'blank' ceramic vessels in production lines, enhancing a sense of potential and transience.

Investigating the studio as a place of community, creativity and supplementary objects, the made sculptures were supported by found objects taken directly from the sites of exhibition. In Spode, the work was presented on furniture from the abandoned workshops, whereas in Clay Arch, these were replaced by packing crates and objects from the active international residency hosted there.



Crates unpacked at Clay
Arch, found industrial
object from Spode Factory
Clay Arch
2018



OUTPUT

Touch Me Use Me
Clay Arch, Gimhae
2018

Touch Me Use Me was commissioned by the British Ceramic Biennial in 2017, and first shown at the AWARD exhibition at Spode Factory, Stoke on Trent, UK. It was also developed further as a second installation as part of the 2017-18 cultural exchange between South Korea and Britain, at the internationally renowned museum and ceramic residency, Clay Arch Gimhae in South Korea.

The BCB exhibition is an international ceramics exhibition which brings together 100 artists over a two month period. Clay Arch is an international ceramic gallery, museum and artist residency. The exhibition at Clay Arch had over 100,000 visitors over the six month period, and Masterman also contributed to a published catalogue and international symposium on the opening night.

